

10/662,771

Remarks

In the Office Action mailed on November 23, 2005, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, and 5-12 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McDonald, U.S. Patent No. 3,721,456, in view of Ito et al., WO9532165; and rejected claims 3 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McDonald '456 in view of Ito et al., WO9532165, and further in view of Lauritzen et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,464,249.

Regarding the rejection of claims 1, 2, and 5-12, the Examiner states that:

"McDonald teaches a gas generator for a vehicle occupant protection system comprising an elongated housing having a predetermined length and having a first end and a second end; a first propellant body 36; a second propellant body 42; a perforated sleeve contained within the housing."

However, McDonald '456 does not disclose an inflator having both "...a first propellant body contained within said housing, said first propellant body having a length substantially coextensive with said housing...", and "...a second propellant body substantially coextensive with said first propellant body..." as recited in independent claims 1 and 8 of the instant application. In one embodiment, the first and second propellant bodies of the present invention comprise propellant bodies 31 and 33 formed from gas generant compositions having the constituents recited in claim 1. In another embodiment, the first and second propellant bodies of the present invention comprise propellant body 33 and combustible wick 30. In contrast, features 36 and 42 cited by the Examiner are *tubes* in which elements of the inflator are positioned, not gas generant compositions as set forth in claims 1 and 8 of the instant application. The only propellant substance described in McDonald '456 is the black powder positioned within tube 36. There is no second propellant substance set forth in the McDonald '456 description.

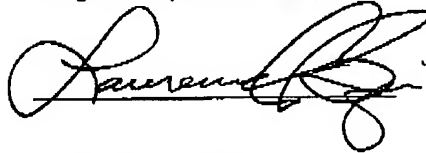
Similarly, Ito et al. does not disclose an inflator having both "...a first propellant body contained within said housing, said first propellant body having a length substantially coextensive with said housing...", and "...a second propellant body substantially coextensive with said first propellant body..." as recited in claims 1 and 8. Therefore, even if the cited references were combined, the combination would not include all of the features set forth in claims 1 and 8. Thus, a prima face case of obviousness is not established, and the rejection of claims 1 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) should be withdrawn.

10/662,771

Applicants respectfully submit that, as independent claim 1 is deemed patentable, dependent claims 2-7 are also patentable, as they depend from claim 1. Similarly, as independent claim 8 is deemed patentable, dependent claims 9-12 are also patentable, as they depend from claim 8.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the Applicant respectfully submits that all rejections of record have been overcome. The Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,



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